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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/942,241	08/29/2001	Krishan Chari	82300D-W	9136

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EXAMINER

FORMAN, BETTY J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1634

DATE MAILED: 07/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/942,241

Applicant(s)

CHARI ET AL.

Examiner

BJ Forman

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 May 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24, 26-28, 30-34, 43-46 and 48-51 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 44-46, 48 and 49 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 26-28 30-34 43 50-51 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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FINAL ACTION

Status of the Claims

1. This action is in response to papers filed 4 May 2004 in which claims 1, 3, 6-9, 18-20, 24, 27, 32, 44, 48-51 were amended and claims 29 and 47 were canceled. All of the amendments have been thoroughly reviewed and entered.

The previous rejections in the Office Action dated 9 February 2004, not reiterated below, are withdrawn in view of the amendments. All of the arguments have been thoroughly reviewed and are discussed below as they apply to the instant grounds for rejection. New grounds for rejection, necessitated by amendment, are discussed.

Election/Restrictions

2. Applicant traverses the restriction of claims 44-49 submitted 4 December 2003. The traversal is on the grounds that claims 44-49 include all features of, or depend from, product claims under consideration and hence the subject matter of the withdrawn claims is substantially the same as those being searched. The argument has been considered. However, as stated in the previous office action, the claimed product can be made by another process of making that product than the process claimed in the new claims. Furthermore, a search of the new claims would not be co-extensive with the instant claims because a search of the new claims would include methods of coating, gelling, spreading not required by the product claims. Hence, it is maintained that undue burden would be required to examine the new claims along with those currently being examined.

The restriction is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found

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allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined in accordance with the provisions of MPEP § 821.04. **Process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the patentable product** will be entered as a matter of right if the amendment is presented prior to final rejection or allowance, whichever is earlier. Amendments submitted after final rejection are governed by 37 CFR 1.116; amendments submitted after allowance are governed by 37 CFR 1.312.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103, and 112. Until an elected product claim is found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowed product claim will not be rejoined. See "Guidance on Treatment of Product and Process Claims in light of *In re Ochiai*, *In re Brouwer* and 35 U.S.C. § 103(b)," 1184 O.G. 86 (March 26, 1996). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, Applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution either to maintain dependency on the product claims or to otherwise include the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

3. Claims 44-46 and 48-49 are withdrawn from consideration.
4. Claims 1-24, 26-28, 30-34, 43 and 50-51 are under prosecution.

Comments

5. Claims 1-24, 26, and 50 are drawn to a coating composition. Claims 27-28, 30-34 and 51 are drawn to a microarray.

The claimed coating composition comprises microspheres dispersed in a fluid containing a coating aid and a gelling agent. The claims, as amended, further describe intended uses and/or functions of the composition e.g. forms an immobilizing gel, the gel includes a single layer of microspheres in a random distribution such that the microspheres are evenly spread with a uniform density. The limitation of forming an immobilizing a gel and further descriptions of the formed gel are not interpreted as limitations of the claimed

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composition because it is the composition being claimed. Recitations of intended use or function do not limit a product claim.

The courts have stated that claim containing a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed product is intended to be used does not differentiate the claimed product from a prior art product if the prior art teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987).

The claimed microarray comprises a substrate coated with a composition comprising microspheres in a gel, wherein the gel is formed from gelation of a fluid and the microspheres are spread with a uniform density on the substrate. The claimed forming, gelation and spread are not deemed to limit the claimed microarray because the courts have stated that a product is not limited by the process of making that product.

“[E]ven though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.” *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) see MPEP 2113.

Applicant's comments incorrectly represent the examiner's comments during the interview of 28 April 2004. The claims, as currently amended, were not presented or discussed during the interview. Therefore, the examiner could not have discussed the prior art in view of the instant claims nor could the examiner have admitted the prior art does not teach the instantly claimed “evenly spread” nor could the examiner have admitted that the combination of Walt et al and McGall does not teach the instantly claimed invention, nor could the examiner have agreed that Anderson does not achieve the random distribution as claimed, nor could the examiner agreed to or admitted that the cited prior art does not teach the claimed invention. In contrast, the examiner stated that amendments submitted for

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discussion would not be free of the cited art and the examiner suggested the claims be amended to describe the inventive random single layer as defined in the specification at page 11 (see interview summary). The specification at page 11 describes coating compositions (i.e. formations 1 and 2) and microarrays made using those formulations.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

7. Claims 1-8, 13, 15-17, 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sutton et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,714,340, issued 3 February 1998).

Regarding Claim 1, Sutton et al disclose a coating composition comprising microspheres (beads) dispersed in a fluid containing a coating aid and a gelling agent wherein the gelling agent forms a gel (Column 3, lines 3-10; Column 6, line 55-Column 7, line 27; and Column 11, lines 53-57) wherein the gel is capable of immobilizing the microspheres at random positions on a substrate (Fig. 2-5 illustrate the “receptor beads” randomly positioned on the substrate, Column 9, line 32-Column 10, line 15).

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Regarding Claim 2, Sutton et al disclose the support is not premarked and does not contain microwells (Column 9, lines 33-41 and Fig. 1-7).

Regarding Claim 3, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the pattern is maintained upon gelling (Column 7, lines 33-41 and Fig. 2-5).

Regarding Claim 4, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres are chemically functionalized to have surface active sites (Column 2, lines 32-34 and Column 5, line 27-Column 6, lines 28).

Regarding Claim 5, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the active sites carry organic or inorganic attachments (Column 2, lines 32-34 and Column 5, line 27-Column 6, lines 28).

Regarding Claim 6, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the active site has organic or inorganic attachments thereon that are capable of chemical or physical interaction (Column 2, lines 32-34 and Column 5, line 27-Column 6, lines 28).

Regarding Claim 7, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the active site is bioactive (Column 2, lines 32-34 and Column 5, line 27-Column 6, lines 28).

Regarding Claim 8, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the bioactive site interacts with proteins or fragments thereof (Column 10, lines 15-39).

Regarding Claim 13, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the gelling agent undergoes thermal gelation (e.g. 37° C, Column 19, lines 10-28).

Regarding Claim 15, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter of between 1 and 50 microns (Column 5, lines 11-32). It is noted that both the "bead spreading layer" and the "receptor layer" of Sutton et al meet the limitations of Claim 1.

Regarding Claim 16, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter of between 3 and 30 microns (Column 5, lines 11-32).

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Regarding Claim 17, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter of between 5 and 20 microns (Column 5, lines 11-32).

Regarding Claim 21, Sutton et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres comprise a synthetic or natural polymeric material (Column 5, lines 11-32).

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant argues that in contrast to the instantly claimed single layer, the microspheres of Sutton et al form a stack comprising multiple layers of beads. Applicant asserts that the claimed invention is directed to microspheres immobilized in a random distribution and spread evenly with a uniform density. The argument has been considered but is not found persuasive because the above claims are drawn to a coating composition "for making a microarray". Arguments regarding the intended use of the composition e.g. forming, immobilizing in random distribution (e.g. Poisson distribution) and spreading are not commensurate with the claims because, as cited above, the courts have stated that a product must be defined by its components, not use.

Applicant's arguments address the microarray made using the claimed coating composition which is an intended use for the composition. In contrast to Applicant's assertion, the claimed composition comprising microspheres (beads) dispersed in a fluid containing a coating aid and a gelling agent (Column 3, lines 3-10; Column 6, line 55-Column 7, line 27; and Column 11, lines 53-57) is taught and therefore anticipated by Sutton et al.

9. Claims 1-24, 26 and 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Pierce et al (U.S. Patent No. 4,258,001, issued 24 March 1981).

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Regarding Claim 1, Pierce et al disclose a coating composition comprising microspheres (beads) dispersed in a fluid containing a coating aid and a gelling agent wherein the gelling agent forms a gel (Abstract and Column 16, line 55-Column 18, line 39) wherein the gel is capable of immobilizing the microspheres at random positions on a substrate (Fig. 2-14 illustrate randomly positioned beads on the substrate (Column 17 lines 1-67).

Regarding Claim 2, Pierce et al disclose the support is not premarked and does not contain microwells (Column 24, line 65-Column 25, line 5 and Fig. 2-14).

Regarding Claim 3, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the pattern is maintained upon gelling (Column 19, lines 48-65).

Regarding Claim 4, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres are chemically functionalized to have surface active sites (Column 30, line 32-Column31, line 44).

Regarding Claim 5, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the active sites carry organic or inorganic attachments (Column 30, line 32-Column31, line 44).

Regarding Claim 6, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the active site has organic or inorganic attachments thereon that are capable of chemical or physical interaction (Column 30, line 32-Column31, line 44).

Regarding Claim 7, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the active site is bioactive (Column 30, line 32-Column31, line 44).

Regarding Claim 8, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the bioactive site interacts with proteins or fragments thereof (Column 30, line 32-Column31, line 44).

Regarding Claim 9, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microsphere contains a signature (Column 31, lines 9-19).

Regarding Claim 10, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the signature comprises an oil-soluble dye (Column 31, lines 9-19).

Regarding Claim 11, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the signature is interrogatable by optical means (Column 31, lines 9-19).

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Regarding Claim 12, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the gelling agent is gelatin i.e. the microspheres within the composition are coated with gelatin therefore the composition comprises a gelatin gelling agent (Column 30, lines 49-54).

Regarding Claim 13, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the gelling agent undergoes thermal gelation (Column 19, lines 48-65).

Regarding Claim 14, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the gelling agent is gelatin i.e. the microspheres within the composition are coated with gelatin therefore the composition comprises a gelatin gelling agent (Column 30, lines 49-54).

Regarding Claim 15, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter of between 1 and 50 microns (Column 9, lines 35-64).

Regarding Claim 16, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter of between 3 and 30 microns (Column 9, lines 35-64).

Regarding Claim 17, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres have a mean diameter of between 5 and 20 microns (Column 9, lines 35-64).

Regarding Claims 18-20, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microsphere range in size from 1 to 200 microns (Column 9, lines 40-41). The instant claims are drawn to microspheres "capable of being" immobilized at concentrations 100-1 million/cm²; 1,000 to 200,00 / cm²; and 10,000 to 100,00/cm². While Pierce do not teach a density of immobilization, the 1 micron microspheres of Pierce are clearly capable of being immobilized at the claimed densities as claimed. Therefore, Pierce discloses the claimed microspheres.

Regarding Claim 21, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres comprise a synthetic or natural polymeric material (Table I, Column 13, lines 8-44).

Regarding Claim 22, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the polymeric material is amorphous i.e. polystyrene (Table I, Column 13, lines 8-44).

Regarding Claim 23, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the polymeric material is amorphous i.e. polystyrene (Table I, Column 13, lines 8-44).

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Regarding Claim 24, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein at least one active site comprises a functionality as claimed (Column 10, line 56-Column 13, line 4).

Regarding Claim 26, Pierce et al disclose the composition wherein the microspheres are prepared by emulsion polymerization (Column 10, lines 42-65).

Regarding Claim 50, Pierce et al disclose a coating composition comprising polymeric microspheres (Table I, Column 13, lines 8-44) dispersed in a fluid containing a coating aid and a gelling agent wherein the gelling agent forms a gel (Abstract and Column 16, line 55-Column 18, line 39) wherein the gel is capable of immobilizing the microspheres at random positions on a substrate (Fig. 2-14 illustrate randomly positioned beads on the substrate (Column 17 lines 1-67) and wherein the microspheres are immobilized upon sol-to-gel transition (Column 30, lines 49-54). The instant specification defines polymers capable of sol-to-gel transition as including gelatin. Pierce et al teach gelation (Column 30, lines 49-54).

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant argues that in contrast to the instantly claimed single layer, the microspheres of Pierce form a three-dimensional structure. The argument has been considered but is not found persuasive because the above claims are drawn to a coating composition “for making a microarray”. Arguments regarding the intended use of the composition e.g. forming, immobilizing in random distribution (e.g. Poisson distribution) and spreading are not commensurate with the claims because, as cited above, the courts have stated that a product must be defined by its components, not use.

Applicant’s arguments address the microarray made using the claimed coating composition which is an intended use for the composition. In contrast to Applicant’s assertion, the claimed coating composition comprising microspheres (beads) dispersed in a fluid containing a coating aid and a gelling agent wherein the gelling agent forms a gel (Abstract and Column 16, line 55-Column 18, line 39) wherein the gel is capable of

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immobilizing the microspheres at random positions on a substrate is taught and therefore anticipated by Pierce

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 27-28, 30-34, 43 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Pierce et al (U.S. Patent No. 4,258,001, issued 24 March 1981) in view of Walt et al (WO 00/16101, published 23 March 2000) and Han et al (Nature Biotechnology, 2001, 19: 631-635)

Regarding Claim 27, Pierce et al disclose a microarray comprising a substrate coated with a composition comprising microspheres (beads) dispersed in a fluid containing a coating aid and a gelling agent wherein the gelling agent forms a gel (Column 8, lines 24-27 and Column 16, line 55-Column 18, line 39) wherein the gel is capable of immobilizing the microspheres at random positions on a substrate (Fig. 2-14 illustrate randomly positioned beads on the substrate (Column 17 lines 1-67). Pierce et al do not teach the microspheres are immobilized in a single layer having a uniform density.

However, a single layer of microspheres randomly immobilized at a uniform density was well known in the art at the time the claimed invention was made as taught by Walt et al who teach a similar microarray. The microarray comprising a substrate comprising microspheres

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immobilized at random positions on the substrate in a single layer (page 22, lines 9-22) and at a uniform density (e.g. fig. 11 and page 6, lines 21-28).

Han et al also teach a similar microarray of randomly immobilized microspheres at a uniform density (page 632, right column first full paragraph). Han et al further teach a motivation for the single layer and uniform density i.e. simultaneous detection of multiple targets at the single microsphere level and on high density arrays (paragraph spanning page 634-635).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to modify the immobilized microspheres of Pierce et al with the uniform density single layer taught by Walt et al and Han et al for the expected benefit of detecting multiple targets at the single microsphere level on high density arrays as desired in the art as taught by Han et al (paragraph spanning page 634-635).

Regarding Claim 28, Pierce et al disclose the microarray wherein the substrate is free of receptors designed to physically or chemically interact with the microspheres (Column 24, line 65-Column 25, line 37) whereby the microspheres remain stably dispersed within the carrier i.e. not interacting with the support (Column 17, lines 1-21 and Column 18, lines 1-24).

Regarding Claim 30, Pierce et al disclose the microarray wherein the gelling agent is gelatin i.e. the microspheres within the composition are coated with gelatin therefore the composition comprises a gelatin gelling agent (Column 30, lines 49-54).

Regarding Claim 31, Pierce et al disclose the microarray wherein the microspheres bear chemically active sites (Column 10, line 56-Column 13, line 3 and Column 30, line 32-Column 31, line 44).

Regarding Claim 32, Pierce et al disclose the microarray wherein the active site is bioactive (Column 30, line 32-Column 31, line 44).

Regarding Claim 33, Pierce et al disclose the microarray wherein the substrate comprises glass, plastic, cellulose acetate (Column 24, line 65-Column 25, line 37).

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Regarding Claim 34, Pierce et al disclose the microarray wherein the substrate is flexible e.g. paper (Column 25, lines 1-3).

Regarding Claim 43, Pierce et al disclose the microarray wherein the support is not premarked and does not contain microwells (Column 24, line 65-Column 25, line 5 and Fig. 2-14).

Regarding Claim 51, Pierce et al disclose a microarray comprising a substrate coated with a composition comprising randomly immobilized polymeric microspheres (Table I, Column 13, lines 8-44) wherein the gel is formed by a sol-to-gel transition of a fluid containing the microsphere, a coating aid and a gelling agent (Column 8, lines 24-27 and Column 16, line 55-Column 18, line 39) wherein the microspheres are immobilized upon sol-to-gel transition as defined by the specification (Column 30, lines 49-54). The instant specification defines polymers capable of sol-to-gel transition as including gelatin.

Pierce et al do not teach the microspheres are immobilized in a single layer.

However, a single layer of microspheres randomly immobilized was well known in the art at the time the claimed invention was made as taught by Walt et al who teach a similar microarray. The microarray comprising a substrate comprising microspheres immobilized at random positions on the substrate in a single layer (page 22, lines 9-22) and at a uniform density (e.g. fig. 11 and page 6, lines 21-28).

Han et al also teach a similar microarray of randomly immobilized single layer of microspheres (page 632, right column first full paragraph). Han et al further teach a motivation for the single layer and uniform density i.e. simultaneous detection of multiple targets at the single microsphere level and on high density arrays (paragraph spanning page 634-635).

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13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

14. No claim is allowed.

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BJ Forman whose telephone number is (571) 272-0741. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00 TO 3:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Benzion can be reached on (571) 272-0782. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

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system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.



BJ Forman, Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 1634
July 15, 2004